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The knight recognizes her and sees the love he can not return. In spite, however, of his coldness, the little maid nurses him back to strength, and the hermit finally tells him he owes his life to her care :

"And the sick man forgot her simple blush,
Would call her friend and sister, sweet Elaine,
Would listen for her coming and regret
Her parting step, and held her tenderly,
And loved her with all love except the love
Of man and woman when they love their best
Closest and sweetest, and had died the death
In any knightly fashion for her sake.
And peradventure had he seen her first
She might have made this and that other world
Another world for the sick man ; but now
The shackles of an old love straitened him,
His honor rooted in dishonor stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true."

Elaine continues her ministrations although she sees that Lancelot's love is not for her, and wearies herself thinking she must die of love :

"But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt was whole,
To Astolat returning rode the three.
There morn by morn, arraying her sweet self
In that wherein she deemed she looked her best,
She came before Sir Lancelot, for she thought
'If I be loved, these are my festal robes,
If not, the victim's flowers before he fall.'
And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid
That she should ask some goodly gift of him
For her own self or hers ; 'and do not shun
To speak the wish most near to your true heart ;
Such service have you done me, that I make
My will of yours, and prince and lord am I
In mine own land, and what I will I can.'"

This, as might be imagined, does not suit the maiden, and Lancelot, like a stupid man, lingers to find out what it is she wants. At last he tells her he must be going :

"Then out she brake :
'Going ? and we shall never see you more.
And I must die for want of one bold word.'
'Speak : that I live to hear,' he said, 'is yours.'
Then suddenly and passionately she spoke :
'I have gone mad. I love you : let me die.'
'Ah sister,' answered Lancelot, 'what is this ?'
And innocently extending her white arms,
'Your love,' she said, 'your love — to be your wife.'
And Lancelot answered, 'Had I chosen to wed,
I had been wedded earlier, sweet Elaine :
But now there never will be wife of mine.'
'No, no,' she cried, 'I care not to be wife,
But to be with you still, to see your face,
To serve you, and to follow you through the world.'
And Lancelot answered, 'Nay, the world, the world,
All ear and eye, with such a stupid heart
To interpret ear and eye, and such a tongue
To blare its own interpretation — nay,
Full ill then should I quit your brother's love,
And your good father's kindness.'"

In this reply the maiden persists in reading her death sentence ; nor does Lancelot's philosophical assurance, that what she feels is only "love's first flash in youth," at which she will one day smile, avail to restore her, and she is borne into the castle swooning. Her father, who has heard their conversation, tells Lancelot he is too courteous, and begs him to use some rough discourtesy toward her. But this the knight can not bring himself to do, further than to ride away without farewell to her, taking his shield.

After his departure the maiden still pines for him, refusing all proffers of comfort :

"And in those days she made a little song,
And called her song 'The Song of Love and Death,'
And sang it : sweetly could she make and sing :

Sweet is true love, though given in vain, in vain ;
And sweet is death who puts an end to pain :
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

Love, art thou sweet ? Then bitter death must be :
Love, thou art bitter ; sweet is death to me.
O love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

Sweet love, that seems not made to fade away,
Sweet death, that seems to make us loveless clay,
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

I fain would follow love, if that could be ;
I needs must follow death, who calls for me ;
Call and I follow, I follow ! let me die."

The song is sung, ending with a wail which her brothers hear, and shudder, thinking it the "phantom of the house that ever shrieked before a death," and call their father, all hastening to the sick girl's cham-

ber, where she tells them her dreams — indulged ever since childhood — of seeing the palace of the king, and plans out her voyage to and reception at that palace, which, of course, seem to her father the raving of delirium, and he tries even yet to stem the tide of her love by disparaging Lancelot, repeating the story of his love for the queen. This, however, she scorns as idle gossip, and, putting one side Sir Torre's indignation at Lancelot, asks for a priest to shrive her.

"So when the ghostly man had come and gone,
She with a face, bright as for sin forgiven,
Besought Lavaine to write as she devised
A letter, word for word ; and when he asked
'Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear lord ?'
Then will I bear it gladly ;' she replied,
'For Lancelot and the queen and all the world,
But I myself must bear it.'"

Then she begs her father, as he never yet denied a request of hers, to deny not this, and directs how her quaint idea of herself bearing the letter to the queen is to be carried out :

"Lay the letter in my hand
A little ere I die, and close the hand
Upon it ; I shall guard it even in death.
And when the heat is gone from out my heart,
Then take the little bed on which I died
For Lancelot's love, and deck it like the queen's
For richness, and me also like the queen
In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.
And let there be prepared a chariot-bier
To take me to the river, and a barge
Be ready on the river, clothed in black.
I go in state to court, to meet the queen.
There surely I shall speak for mine own self,
And none of you can speak for me so well.
And therefore let our dumb old man alone
Go with me, he can steer and row, and he
Will guide me to that palace, to the doors.'"

Her father promises — as what father would not ? — and she grows so cheerful they begin to persuade themselves she is not dying after all ;

"But ten slow mornings past, and on the eleventh
Her father laid the letter in her hand,
And closed the hand upon it, and she died.
So that day there was dole in Astolat.
But when the next sun brake from underground,
Then, those two brethren slowly with bent brows
Accompanying, the sad chariot bier
Past like a shadow through the field, that shone
Full-summer, to that stream whereon the barge,
Palled all its length in blackest samite, lay.
There sat the lifelong creature of the house,
Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,
Winking his eyes, and twisted all his face.
So those two brethren from the chariot took
And on the black decks laid her in her bed,
Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung
The silken case with braided blazonings,
And kissed her quiet brows, and saying to her,
'Sister, farewell forever,' and again,
'Farewell, sweet sister,' parted all in tears.
Then rose the dumb old servitor, and the dead
Steered by the dumb went upward with the flood —
In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter — all her bright hair streaming down —
And all the coverlid was cloth of gold
Drawn to her waist, and she herself in white
All but her face, and that clear-featured face
Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead
But fast asleep, and lay as though she smiled."

Meantime Lancelot has reached the court, and, on the very day when the funeral barge has started on its strange journey, attempts to present to the queen the hardly won diamonds ; but she, having heard all the gossip about Elaine's love for the knight, repulses him, throwing the jewels through the window into the stream, and rushes away to indulge the woman's refuge of tears. Just then comes the barge with its fair freight and mysterious helmsman to the water-front of the palace, where it is received with awe and wonder, the king himself at last joining the crowd of gazers at it when the dumb steersman signifies his destination is reached :

"So Arthur bade the meek Sir Percivale
And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid ;
And reverently they bore her into hall.
Then came the fine Gawain and wondered at her,
And Lancelot later came and mused at her,
At last the queen herself and pitied her :
But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,
Stooped, took, brake seal, and read it ; this was all :

'Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the Lake,
I, sometime called the maid of Astolat,
Come, for you left me taking no farewell,
Hither, to take my last farewell of you.
I loved you, and my love had no return,
And therefore my true love has been my death.
And therefore to our lady Guinevere,
And to all other ladies, I make moan.
Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.
Pray for my soul, thou too, Sir Lancelot,
As thou art a knight peerless.'"

Then follow the tears of the assembled court, with the explanations of Lancelot, a good part of which, of course, are for the private understanding of the queen, who sees how groundless was her wrath. Then the king decrees for the maid most honorable burial :

"So toward that shrine which then in all the realm
Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly went
The marshaled order of their Table Round,
And Lancelot sad beyond his wont, to see
The maiden buried, not as one unknown,
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obsequies,
And mass, and rolling music, like a queen.
And when the knights had laid her comely head
Low in the dust of half-forgotten kings,
Then Arthur spake among them, 'Let her tomb
Be costly, and her image thereupon.
And let the shield of Lancelot at her feet
Be carven, and her lily in her hand.
And let the story of her dolorous voyage
For all true hearts be blazoned on her tomb
In letters gold and azure !' which was wrought
Thereafter."

And so ends the story of Elaine. Of the queen's humble submission to Sir Lancelot, of his remorse and indecision, and of the king's loving trustfulness, there is no need to speak, because with them the story of the "lily maid of Astolat" has nothing in common.

The picture from which is made the beautiful engraving in this number of THE ALDINE, was painted by Mr. Toby E. Rosenthal, a young artist of American birth though of German education in art. He was born at San Francisco in 1845, his parents being Germans, and studied at the Academy in Munich, where he acquired quite a reputation as a clever caricaturist and producer of humorous and comic illustrations and afterward of *genre* pictures. The "Elaine" exhibited at Berlin, shows conclusively his claims to high rank as a delineator of the romantic and touching, giving another proof that tears and laughter are of near kin. The manner in which the artist has seized upon the idea of the poet and expressed it in form as Tennyson did in words, makes comment superfluous. Whoever can feel the one can not fail to be charmed with the other also.

"AT THE CRADLE."

No subject, love, perhaps, excepted, has more often inspired poet and painter than that of motherhood. Indeed it may be doubted whether even love has been so often the theme of the artist's pencil as has the relation of mother and child. There is always in the boy and the man such a love and reverence for his own mother, and in the breast of the girl and woman, from the cradle to the grave, the maternal instinct is always so strong, that there is little wonder that motherhood comes to be the most sacred tie our nature recognizes. It is to this fact, beyond doubt, that we owe the many Madonnas the artists of all ages since the beginning of the Christian Era have given us ; nay, more, it is this feeling which has given us the religious conception of the mother of Christ as an object of special love and adoration, which has formed and does form so large a portion of the creed of the larger part of Christendom, and of which not even the sternest Protestantism has been able entirely to divest itself. Nor did the manifestation of the feeling begin with Christianity. It is only that we have so few of the works of poets and artists older than Christianity left to us, that makes it seem so. What fragments time has left of older works show as conclusively that "mother" has been in all ages a sacred name.

Nor is it difficult to see why the artist should always choose to represent the mother with her young child, for it is in babyhood only that the child is peculiarly the mother's. Later in life he develops an individu-



AT THE CRADLE. - AFTER ERNST ANDERS.

ality which makes him more an independent being — he becomes himself, as it were, and ceases to be so peculiarly his mother's. Cornelia might be proud of her noble sons — her jewels — but they were, after all, less hers than when wrapped in their swaddling-clothes. In the babe the mother worships the possible — in the man the actual may too often be cause for regret.

It is this worship of the possible that the artist has personified for us in the picture, and he has emphasized and intensified it by making the mother also a widow. Young enough to have just begun to live the life for which all womanhood yearns, she finds herself bereft of the other half of herself, and now sits looking in the face of the unconscious babe for the lineaments of

its lost father, while hoping time may make the infant another such a man, forgetting, most probably, that the very fruition of her hopes will be their downfall, and that, when grown, her babe will leave her, even as his father left a mother for another "dearer one yet than all other."

Ernst Anders, the painter of this picture, was a



THE MONK AND THE COUNTESS.—AFTER LIEZEN-MAYER.

pupil of Wilhelm Sohn, of Dusseldorf, and he has shown in this work not only the fine conception of a true artist, but also a painstaking execution and an attention to details which entitle him to a high rank. The more his work is studied, the more accurate and careful will this attention be seen to have been.

THE MONK AND THE COUNTESS.

GERMANY, and especially the Rhine region, is full of churches, monasteries and convents, founded in the time, before the Middle Ages, when Christianity is supposed to have been carried to the Continent by monks

and devotees from the British Isles, and chiefly from Ireland, which was the great head-quarters for converts to Christianity in those days. It was toward the end of the sixth century that St. Columbanus left Ireland to preach the gospel on the Continent, being partly moved by a missionary zeal and partly by the